REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 are pending.

103 Rejection

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24

In paragraph 5 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0101367 by Bartfai et al. (referred to hereinafter as "Bartfai") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,908 by Lindsay et al. (referred to hereinafter as "Lindsay"). The Applicants have reviewed the cited reference and respectfully submit that the embodiments recited by the claims are neither taught nor suggested by Bartfai or Lindsay, alone or in combination.

Independent Claim 1 recites,

> A method of error protection comprising:
> detecting an error during communication between nodes in a network, said nodes separated by a link;
> blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error;
> unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and
> setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element. (emphasis added)

Applicants agree with the Office Action's statement that Bartfai does not teach or suggest "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element" (emphasis added) as recited by Claim 1. In fact, Applicants want to further point out that Bartfai teaches away from "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," (emphasis added). For example, at lines 17-19 of paragraph 0004, Bartfai states "...in the past serious adapter errors have caused entire nodes to become nonfunctional solely because of adapter problems." At lines 10-17 of

paragraph 0029, Bartfai addresses this problem of entire nodes becoming "nonfunctional solely because of adapter problems" by teaching,

> The nonaffected nodes 'know' nothing of the specific adapter problem; however, attempts to send messages to the affected node are at least temporarily suspended. The affected local node is the only one which suspends the communication protocols so as to stop message traffic prior to an adapter reset operation. This causes affected applications running on the other nodes to stall, but not to terminate (emphasis added).

Therefore Bartfai teaches away from "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," (emphasis added) as recited by Claim 1 and cannot be combined with another reference such as Lindsay to teach or suggest "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," as recited by Claim 1.

Even if Bartfai could be combined with Lindsay, Lindsay still does not remedy the deficiency in Bartfai because neither Bartfai nor Lindsay teach or suggest, "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," (emphasis added) as recited by Claim 1. For example, referring to Col. 2 lines 8-33, Lindsay states that the conventional art has not adequately solved contention problems between different computing elements attempting to access information for example in an error log register. Referring to Col. 7 lines 42-45, Lindsay teaches "The use of three registers, namely, the count register, the error tag register and the error log clear register along with the status register, ensure that error information is not accidentally lost in a multiprocessor's element's system." At Col. 6 lines 18-47, Lindsay, among other places, provides details on how to use the three registers to "ensure that error information is not accidentally lost in a multiprocessor's element's system." Note that Lindsay teaches, for example at Col. 6 lines 26-27 among other places, that the status register is associated with a specific error log register. However, Lindsay does not teach, "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said

first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," (emphasis added) as recited by Claim 1.

The Office Action asserted that Lindsay taught "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," at Col. 5 lines 52-55. Col. 5 lines 52-55 state,

> FIG. 2 provides a high level description of a method of checking a status register by a compute element and validating the error log information retrieved. FIG. 2, compute elements periodically check the status register for an error condition at step 200.

It appears that the Office Action is asserting that Lindsay's compute elements teach Claim 1's nodes and that Lindsay's status register teaches Claim 1's "first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes...wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element..." However Lindsay says nothing about each of his compute elements having a corresponding position in his status register and therefore Lindsay cannot teach or suggest "setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element," (emphasis added) as recited by Claim 1.

Therefore, independent Claim 1 should be patentable. The independent Claims 9 and 17 should be patentable for similar reasons that independent Claim 1 should be patentable. Claims 3-8 depend on Claim 1, Claims 11-16 depend on Claim 9, Claims 19-24 depend on Claim 17 and include all of the limitations of the respective independent Claims 1, 9 and 17. Therefore Applicants respectfully submit that the dependent Claims are patentable for at least the reasons that the respective independent Claims are patentable.

Conclusions

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims.

Based on the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these claims.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,
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